

The Church in the United States

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"He humbled Himself becoming obedient unto death even to the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath exalted Him and hath given Him a name which is above all names. That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those that are in heaven, on earth and under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus is in the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2:8-11.

IT is hard to realize that the hand which wrote this splendid confession of faith in Christ as God, this confident prophecy of Christ's ultimate triumph on the earth which had crucified Him, was itself weighted with a chain and in all likelihood trembled with the prisoner's bonds to which he makes so many references in this epistle. Yet the disparity between the Church of Paul's vision and the Church of Paul's time, marvelous as it is, as witnessing to his faith and courage, has in more or less degree been found in all the ages of Christendom. That every knee should bow, that every tongue should confess the Lord Jesus, is the Apostle's interpretation of the accomplishment of that stupendous program, outlined on the Mountain of the Ascension when Christ bade eleven unlettered fishermen 'go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.' The climax and the completion and the meaning of all creation is the Incarnation of the Son of God. The program of the ages is the realization of this Divine plan. All history turns upon it, yet faith alone discovers it. The Church, with all her powers, supported as she is by the indwelling presence of her Divine Founder exists but to express it. Until the end she shall labor for this alone, that every knee of those on earth should bow in the Name of Jesus and every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus is in the glory of God the Father.

Yet sublime as is her mission, her agents are but men of ordinary minds and ordinary ability and ordinary spirit.

They must accomplish their work normally unaided by miracle, unhelped by the Divine interference. Though St. Paul's faith saw the Church of his dream triumphant, he was on the other hand brought into the sharp realization of its destitution and its difficulties in his own sore trials and distress. Five wasted years in prison found him weary, but unbroken in spirit and courage. He would fain be dissolved and be with Christ, a thing by far the better, yet for the sake of his children begotten to him in Christ he would gladly spend and be spent until the end. Little consolation did he receive from the messages that came to him from afar—they told of the dissensions, the vainglory and the scandals existing among his beloved converts and of the wolves, or, as he describes them in this letter, the dogs that prowled among them seeking to devour their new found faith, so that he prayed he might become a victim and a sacrifice for their faith.

Yet his courage did not fail him. The day of the Lord would surely come and Christ either would be accepted as Master by the elect or recognized as Judge on the Last Day. Had the guard to whom he was chained been able to read the Greek of this epistle doubtless he would have thought Paul mad, as once Festus did in Caesarea, to dream that there should ever come a day when His Master's name would be honored by men. In the ages to come he would have thought, Caesar will still maintain his line in eternal Rome, still rule the world by victorious legions, still hold revel in some golden house like Nero's, but as for this Crestus, as Suetonius calls Him, and as for these Pauls, scum of the earth, homeless and houseless wanderers, the gibbet of Calvary and the headsman's sword at some milestone outside of Rome will be Caesar's effective and final answer.

Yet the soldier would have been wrong in denying and Paul right in claiming the ages for Christ. Caesar is long since dead and Rome conserves her eternity only because the throne of a Fisherman is seated on the Vatican Hill where the Fisherman died for Christ.

OLD AND NEW OBSTACLES.

The Church of all the ages possesses the same Faith,

attempts the same program, experiences the same difficulties and strives against the obstacles as St. Paul did. As he used all his gifts of mind and heart in her service and in the discharge of his ministry neglected nothing that his education or experience or intelligence might contribute to further that high cause, so in all ages and times the Church, while Divinely sustained, depends upon the human zeal and prudence and devotion of her rulers and her people. Let their faith fail or their zeal grow cold and she fails. Let it flourish and she flourishes.

History has this lesson for us and we Catholic men of Chicago brought together tonight in this great meeting of the lovers of the Name of Jesus may well pause as we consider the Apostle's magnificent act of faith, to apply its meaning and significance to this dear Church of our own land. Christ, we know, shall not fail us, but are we in any way through over-confidence or through boastfulness failing His Church? The coincidence of the New Year with our patronal feast invites us to study the methods of the wise children of this world, who, as they cast up their accounts, learn more for the future from the mistakes and the failures of the years gone by than they do from their successes.

Now, on an occasion such as this, it is well for us Catholics to be honest with ourselves, to confess our faults, if we are at fault, and to be our own sharpest critics. However, well or ill it may be for us to do so, the fact is that we rarely do so. We meet usually to praise ourselves, to exclaim at our own greatness and to marvel at our growth. Yesterday we had nothing, we were nobody. Today, as in Tertullian's, we discover that we fill the land. We are millions; we are firmly established; we are deeply rooted, our churches are everywhere; our schools are being multiplied; our institutions are legion. No Church in the land can assemble such crowds, can marshal her men in such thousands, can count her children in such millions. It is the theme and the tone of our frequent jubilees. It is the welcome phrase of our orators and our preachers. It is the vibrant note of our most acceptable seers and prophets.

Yet, I venture to say to you that so far we Catholics of the United States have done little or nothing which gives us the right to think or to say that the future of the Church in this country is assured. Up to this, the faith of American Catholic has been largely a derived faith, the faith of the immigrant, whether Irish, German, Polish, French, Italian or whatever the country of its derivation may be. It has been strengthened and sustained by the memories of other countries, by the languages, the customs, the traditions of the Old World. It has thriven in this soil. It has surprised the enemies of our religion. It has quickened our resourcefulness and produced results which are the admiration of the world.

Still I repeat it, the Catholic movement in the United States so far has been largely controlled by the momentum it received in other lands and bears the characteristics and the limitations of its origins. It is rather a congeries of movements, unrelated and disunited, except for the Sacramental bond and the minimum of unity which the Church's discipline requires. It does not yet appreciate the economies of combination, the strength of solidarity.

Irish Catholic immigration on a large scale was providentially preceded by the religious renewal of the Irish people which accompanied O'Connell's political agitation for Catholic Emancipation. In one sense the great liberator was another apostle of Ireland, for he found his countrymen intimidated and he left them militant Catholics. Now, militancy was precisely the quality which the Irish immigrant needed on his entrance into a new country, which, although it had espoused the principle of political equality a half century before, had still retained the prejudices and the ostracisms of an extreme type of Englishman. He expected opposition and was prepared to fight for his religion when the expected opposition came. This combative quality is still his marked characteristic, surviving the pressing need for it and perhaps absorbing the energy that had better in our modern day be directed towards a more constructive apologetic.

The German Catholic, when in fact a Catholic, came here at a time when the Church in the Fatherland having

been tried in the fiery ordeal of persecution, had developed a policy and perfected an organization which for many years has established it as a tower of strength in the German Empire. The many activities of the Catholics of Germany in the field of politics, of social betterment, of intelligent propaganda, are the admiration of all who know them intimately. It was natural that the German Catholic immigrant should seek to associate himself with the thoughts and the programs of his relatives at home whose language, customs and manners were still familiar to him and, if anything, dearer to him in what seemed a land of exile than they were before he crossed the ocean. Still, his very sincere attachment to the vigorous Church militant of Germany has had this limitation that he has frequently worked with his eye more on European conditions than on those of what has become his own country and that as a Catholic he largely isolated himself from his fellow-Catholics of other nationalities.

The stern apprenticeship of religious persecution with its consequent reactions having been denied some of our modern immigrants, they are in consequence unprepared as Catholics for the temptations and the scandals which unlimited freedom always offers to a simple people who in the short passage of the Atlantic cease to be dwellers of their ancestral fields and become for ever after denizens of the crowded city tenement. It thus remains true that whatever may be the virtues or the defects of the various groups of our Catholic people in the United States, their determining characteristic is still largely something which they brought with them or failed to bring with them from the old countries of Europe. It surely is not anything which has been developed in this country in view of our special needs and demands.

PRODIGIOUS GROWTH OF CHURCH.

Moreover, it is not surprising that the prodigious growth of the Church in the United States has been brought about by an enthusiasm, a loyalty and a generosity which laid more stress on material development than it did on the spiritual and intellectual. Church building and the

erection of all other kinds of buildings, necessary for our work, have been matters of prime importance with us. We found ourselves without a place of worship, without a school or charitable institution and we set ourselves to the task of providing them in the shortest possible space of time. There was no government to give us these buildings or to endow them when obtained; no munificent patrons to take the place of European Governments or of a Church enriched by the pious bounty of other ages. Here everything was to be done at once; done by the poor for the poor. Our conditions have thus unduly emphasized the role of the parish unit, which, however, necessary, is ordinarily a principle of exclusion and of narrowness. The very success that has crowned our parochial activity is a present danger to the Church in this country. The parish indeed built around an altar, which is the seat of our Sacramental life, is indispensable. From a very early age it has been the unit of order and of government immediately dependent upon episcopal jurisdiction and such, no doubt, it will always remain. But as in this country almost the entire income of the Church has been derived from parochial sources, it has been in consequence unduly stressed and holds a position of importance in the Church for which it was not normally intended. The unit of ecclesiastical government which is essentially subordinate is thus with us made to bear all the burdens, and its inability to carry the load is reflected in the abnormal condition of the Church in the United States, which, while distinctly strong in parochial organization, is lamentably weak in national influence. All that can be undertaken by the parish is attempted and usually well done. Even such things as Catholic schools, which have no necessary relation to a parish church, are, because of our financial system, made its appendage. What the parish does not call for is usually neglected or done in a disorderly fashion.

LITERATURE AND CHURCH ACTIVITIES.

Thus the literary expression of Catholic thought being outside the range even of the best-regulated parish, is desultory, uneven, inadequate. Nobody who examined the

publications which appear on the tables of the public libraries of Chicago or any other large American city in whose vicinities millions of Catholics live, would judge that the Catholic body was anything but a timid, touchy and a surely negligible group of citizens who were not yet acclimated. He would never guess from the papers or the periodicals that were being read or from the books that were being called for that there were twenty millions or more of Catholics in the country, that they were more-over alert and practical and most generous in their contributions to the Church and that there is not perhaps a country in the world today where Catholic men are more ready to identify themselves with their religion than here. The unostentatious piety of a metropolis like this city would be worth a pilgrimage were it not so familiar to Catholics in most parts of the country as not to seem remarkable.

Yet without an adequate literary expression, how can we be sure that our present caste of mind will be that of the next generation? The childlike faith of the first generation of the immigrants' children is not a heritage that will pass without contest to succeeding generations who have no race consciousness save that of the country of their birth. Now the dominant thought of the land is not Catholic, but materialistic. There is scarcely a great daily in the country which does not employ Catholics as editorial writers, yet, so negligible a body are we that not even the sharpest censor could detect a distinctly Catholic thought in them which is not either disputed or patronized. Wherever you go in the country you find the same conditions, prodigious parochial activity and supine indifference to the general needs of the Church. As a consequence, Catholics, where they are strongest, are isolated, out of touch with the community, exerting no influence commensurate with their numbers, their enterprises or their splendid constructive thoughts.

How long can this condition last? Does not the Almighty seem to provoke us out of our ghetto-like isolation by the stirrings and the commotions which those whom we consider our enemies raise about our ears by charging us

with all sorts of unthinkable machinations? Is there not a man from Macedonia beckoning us to come over to darkest America, to rural America, which we have always neglected and which now though we ignored it, shows its hunger for knowledge about us by believing the easily refuted lies of our professional defamers? And, indeed, sometimes I do not wonder that those who cannot understand the magnetism of our Sacraments, should, in default of any written or printed word to explain the magnitude of our endeavors and the strength of our devotion, fall back upon the plausible conceit that indeed the Catholic Church is a secret society scarcely speaking above a whisper except to the initiate.

It is never wise to prophesy, yet one does not need to be a prophet or the son of a prophet to forecast a time, and that not far distant, when we shall need all the resources of an effective organization to safeguard our Faith from the attacks, perhaps even of the State. Let me develop this statement which might otherwise seem preposterous.

The American Revolution, which prepared the way for the federation of the colonies into the United States, was largely dominated by the thoughts of Locke as developed in Rousseau's *Contrat Social*. Of the trinity of man's rights, so loudly proclaimed by the French publicist, the American disciple elected liberty above equality and fraternity. Hence, when government was organized in the several States and later under Congress, it was the liberty of the individual that was set in the foreground. The citizen must be free first and foremost and government was designed to concern itself only with what the individual could not do for himself. The Federal Government, derived from that ingenious compromise called the Constitution, was left intentionally so weak that it needed the Supreme Court to confer upon it by elaborate textual criticism of the documents, the complete functions of authority. The traditional common-sense of a judiciary which because it was English in thought was practical enough to disdain logic, thus saved the country from an unwise experimentation of the French philosopher's reveries. The years that have elapsed since the establishment of our country have until recently been loyal to the ancient fiction of

man's liberty as the fundamental franchise of the American citizen. In this atmosphere of theoretical liberty the Church has flourished without let or hindrance, has gone as far as her means would let her with her schools, has built up on all sides works of charity and benevolence and has with a light heart—as if she had never been dispossessed of her property—put all that she could collect or borrow into brick or mortar, into visible assets, into the external embodiments of an institution which meant to stay in the land and had no misgivings about the future. Now, I do not mean to say that what has been done has not been wisely done; that it was possible or desirable to get along on less; that our ingenuous confidence in the security of our national institutions, as they are called, was not an admirable quality of the American Catholic and a clear evidence of how much the Church feels at home in a real democracy.

THE NEW SLOGAN.

Democracies, however, are traditionally fickle; they behead their rulers and annul their pledges as they list or rather as lists that subtle thing, so controllable and yet frequently so uncontrolled, called public opinion, about which Catholics as a body concern themselves so little. Now, if I mistake not, public opinion has of late shifted its allegiance from the motto of liberty to that of efficiency. The triumph of mechanical inventions has so accustomed men to mathematical precision that in many unrelated fields they advocate a system which would efface the individual and set up an automaton. The doctrine of a strong Federal Government is welcomed by all parties now. Reforms on all sides are advocated by Federal law, by constitutional amendment. We wish results; we wish them immediately; we wish them on a large scale. After you have harnessed a man to a machine for years, you are apt to think more of the machine than of the man, to desire to improve the man by making him as nearly a machine as possible. It is an ancient temptation into which men readily fall when they begin to conjure up the demon of the deified State, when patriotism loses its primitive genial sense and becomes an incantation, when the high

priests of this idol make holocausts of all who do not worship at their shrine.

Even if the cloud be no bigger than a man's hand it is big enough to be descried upon the horizon and with the signals of storm we are forewarned for our safety. How long will an omnipotent State, if it ever comes, suffer us to be its only rival in the matter of education? There are some of us who used to dream of State compensation for the secular instruction we give our children and indeed an argument based on that archaic thing, called justice, can be very satisfactorily built up to show how unfair a thing it is to double-tax any law-abiding citizens, for no matter what purpose. The day of such discussions seems remoter now than ever. From many quarters, for various reasons, we discover the gathering assault preparing against our schools. In spite of all disclaimers the Smith-Towner bill is meaningless unless it is an attempt to Federalize all our schools and the Michigan constitutional amendment, happily defeated a few months ago, represents a good deal more than the bigotry to which we attribute it.

THE SPECIALIST AND EDUCATOR.

Year by year, education becomes more the business of the specialist, and year by year, the prestige of the specialist, at least in education, rises higher and higher. The first criticism of the specialist is the disorganization of public education due to the lack of combination and of central government. The second criticism is directed against private schools, especially Catholic parochial schools and he launches his shafts against their least defensible side, that is, the imparting of education in a foreign language. There is a perfect volley of criticism directed against Polish schools at present by such authors as Balch, in "Our Slavic Brethren," Steiner and many others who have been stimulated to write books by the voluminous Roosevelt report on immigration.

The most widely accepted specialists on education, those most consulted by the framers of the law, are men who have no sympathy with Christian, or especially with Catholic education. We sometimes cast up interesting and im-

pressive calculations of the amount of money our schools save the various communities in which they are situated. But what do specialists on education care about saving the people's money? Of all men they have never given the subject a thought. Now, materialism has the instinct of doing everywhere what it does first in the country where it is least hampered by criticism and opposition. France is an instance of a country whose government in recent years yielded itself most willingly and most completely to the voice of the tempter, and as a consequence annulled the liberty of teaching. In the older days when irreligious men persecuted the Church, they erected a scaffold at the crossways and made glorious martyrs of the confessors of the Faith. Today, with the refinement of cruelty, they stifle its power of organization by revising the laws of associations and denying the right to establish schools. Let us not, like the Catholics of France, be blind to these impending dangers, drugging ourselves into the comfortable illusion that such things are impossible in this country and therefore not to be feared. They are indeed both possible and full of danger to us if we remain much longer in our present state of disorganization and parochialism. Only a determined effort to infiltrate public opinion with Catholic thought, only a systematic and broad-visioned searching of heart in quest of our deficiencies, only an enthusiastic comprehension of the strong program our Faith provides, will prepare us for the days in which we must do battle for our ideals and for our principles with adversaries who shall be hard indeed to meet if we allow them now to intrench themselves in the stronghold of the State.

We are as I have said at the parting of the ways, our chances now are even. All governments are becoming more centralized and through the genial influence of democracies more humanized. They attempt to do things that governments never before attempted and they attempt to do them on a grandiose scale. It was first the Reformation which, inspiring an individualistic religious movement, made acute and dishonorable the problems of the poor. In the old Christian order, the poor were never outcasts. The Reformation, as Toulmin Smith was the first to show,

made necessary the establishment of poor houses. Till then, the primary care of the Church had been education and works of charity. For these two public services she received endowments and honors. She it was who kept up that spirit of charity which relieved the State of the necessity of raising taxes for the poor. But first the Reformation changed the status of the problem and next the French Revolution secularized it. States everywhere nowadays are confronting the problem of poverty and its causes from new angles. They treat it as a disease whose germs they seek to isolate and to destroy. Once governments welcomed the assistance of voluntary benevolence. Today it may be correctly said that governments barely tolerate it. There is a feeling, encouraged by the Socialist thought of the day, that the problem of poverty is too big to be dealt with by private charity which is more often a hindrance than a help towards its solution. With wide open hands all our States lavish money on the work of public benevolence. But here a difficulty arises. The State possesses uniquely the material means to deal with the rehabilitation of the fallen, the care of the deficient. But has it the spiritual means which must play their part in all this inspiring service? Has it a code of morals efficient enough to build up the shattered character of many of its charges? Has it a grasp of fundamental principles firm and complete enough to insure its right handling of the delicate problems of correction and relief?

TOO "PROGRESSIVE" FOR THE DECALOGUE

I am no jaundiced critic of the great works done in the name of charity during the last five and twenty years all over the world. On the contrary, I think them admirable in their courage and frequently most praiseworthy in their methods. They go at the problem scientifically as they say, case by case, in the confident hope of abolishing poverty as you would a pest. The splendid audacity of the proposition has aroused an enthusiasm beyond all expectation. Enthusiasts look for quick results, and the specialist is at hand in most unexpected places to show them how to get what they desire. Our Catholic specialist is frequently some devoted nun or warm-hearted Christian who, mixing up this problem with the world-old one of sin,

keeps at it tenaciously as Christians always have done since they found Him in a manger or dying on a cross. But this is not the voice to which our legislators lend attentive ear; this is not the view-point that shows quick results. For the counselors most in request are men who are so progressive that they have no fixed standard of morality, such expert architects of humanity that they have neglected to provide a scale for their drawing and disdain to bother about specifications. I often relate what a young woman, a student of the School of Social Science in New York, told me of the teaching of one of her professors, a University of Princeton man of note. One day he asked his class of forty, mostly young women, "How many of you believe in a fixed standard of morality?"

"A feeble half-dozen hands went up; whereat the professor smiled approvingly.

"Well," he said, "you are vastly more hopeful than I thought you were."

"Why, professor," queried my informant, a Catholic girl, "don't you believe in the Decalogue?"

"Well, that depends," he answered.

"Don't you believe," she persisted, "in the Commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill'?"

"Now, now," he replied, "there are so many angles from which you can view these questions that it will usually depend on circumstances."

He is by no means an exception. He is the rule, the vogue, the authority, teaching pupils today who in turn will do their part to undermine society in the years to come. Who are these people who are holding meetings and raising subscriptions to establish leagues of voluntary parenthood, to remove from our statutes that law which makes it a penal offense to give knowledge tending to produce abortion? Why, these people may be partly Socialists and anarchists, but they are dominated by social reformers, men and women, highly thought of and exerting wide influence in the field of social betterment who are determined to bring the saving knowledge of the restricted family to the poor! With this euphemism they gloss over the odious vice of race-suicide. So negligent or so indifferent indeed are the most of us to the discharge of our

duties as citizens that almost any law may be put on the statute book without arousing us from our slumbers. How widely prevalent this extreme laxity of principle has become even among the leaders of our community was brought home to me not long ago in the course of a conversation with a very estimable gentleman who is deeply interested in social study. He had occasion to refer to a work that was being done by a Salvation Army Rescue Home for that unfortunate class of young women who are nowadays known as unmarried mothers. Someone had praised their work and aroused his criticism. "These mothers and their offspring," he said, "are defective and should not be allowed to be a burden on society. I advocate the French method of dealing with them, remove them, painlessly remove them," he said softly, "use chloroform, but remove them." Never a suspicion of murder in connection with his effective remedy had dawned on that good man's mind, and I have no doubt he would shudder at the sight of blood and would recoil from the thought of inflicting pain even upon a dumb animal.

But why elaborate a thesis which is so easily established? We all know that the spirit of the world today as of old is not the spirit of Christ. We Catholics at least are not deceived by the Christian phraseology in which neopaganism in some places clothes its hard materialistic thought. What we fail to realize, however, is that now is the acceptable time, if ever, for us to take our stand as a formative, constructive influence in the community, that we can only exert a beneficent Catholic influence by comprehending our world program as distinguished from our parochial, and that methods of publicity and of education that have advanced the cause of every wild system among us are open to us in our advocacy of the principles and the policies which, as they underlie the Christian civilization we know, must be the most effective restorative of its declining powers and its departing faith.

Christian men, can there be a more inspiring apostolate than that of bringing this salutary evangel to the land we love and live in? Lift up your eyes and behold the whitening fields. Dare we let the harvest rot which ripens only once? Where better than in a city like Chicago, where

the Catholic ideal is so strong, where thousands of men like you rally so readily with such courage and high resolution to the standard on which is inscribed the Holy Name of Jesus, where the episcopal chair is held by one whose character, whose foresight, whose marvelous energy have already made him, resourceful leader that he is, a man of mark in the Hierarchy of this country, where better, I ask, than in this great metropolis, say rather cosmopolis, of the new world, may this new movement of the Church be inaugurated and carried to a successful conclusion? If we, as representatives of the Christian tradition, are to hold our own in this country we must reverse our policy of timidity, of caution, of perpetual apologetic. It is a policy for the young and the strong and the intelligent that we advocate to enter into the vital thought of the day, to shape, to control public opinion through the exposition of our teaching and the wholesome debate of our arguments, so that living in a country where Church and State are to be forever separate, we may so work that the State may never be set up as a false God over against the God of our fathers.

The Pope and Starving Children

Encyclical Letter of Our Most Holy Lord, Benedict XV., by Divine Providence Pope, to the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, and Other Local Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See, on the Necessity of Rendering Further Assistance to Those Children Who, Owing to the War, Are in a State of Urgent Need.

Venerable Brethren,

Health and Apostolic Benediction:

A whole year has now passed since We (when the war was but a thing of yesterday) called upon all Christians, at the approach of the birthday of Our Lord, to turn their hearts in pity towards the children of Central Europe, who were so severely afflicted by hunger and want that they were wasting away with disease and were face to face with death. And, indeed, a wondrous joy it is to Us that Our appeal has not fallen vainly to the ground—an appeal

which was actuated by that charity which enfolds in its kindly embrace all men, without distinction of race or nation, whosoever bear within them the image of God. The happy issue of Our supplication, Venerable Brethren, is especially well known to you who assisted Us zealously in so salutary an enterprise. For, in truth, a generous supply of money has been collected from the peoples of every land. There has been, as it were, a noble competition in liberality, with the result that the common Father of so many innocent children has been able to look to their necessities and dissipate their sorrows. Nor do We cease to proclaim the kindly Providence of God, whom it has pleased to use Us as a channel whereby the manifold blessings of Christian charity might flow to His abandoned little ones. In this matter We cannot desist from offering a public tribute of praise to the society entitled the "Save the Children Fund," which has exerted all possible care and diligence in the collection of money, clothing, and food. But, indeed, the general scarcity and the high cost of living, which the war has brought in its train, are of such a complex and varied character that the assistance We have rendered has perhaps neither succeeded in reaching those parts of Europe where necessity pressed hard; nor, where help was given, has it always been adequate to the actual need. To this must be added the fact that in the course of the year following the Encyclical Letter which We addressed to you, Venerable Brethren, on this very topic, there has been no appreciable improvement in the lot of most of those areas where it is evident that the people, and especially the young, find life growing yet harder and harder owing to the shortage of the necessities of life. Nay, in some parts, war has flamed out anew and calamities of every kind, to the serious loss of those very elements that it is necessary to re-establish; in other parts where the civil State has been overthrown and where most frightful and disgraceful massacres have been perpetrated, it has come about that numberless families have been reduced to penury; that wives have been bereft of their husbands, and children of their parents; there are many districts, too, where it is so difficult to make provision for the food supply that as a consequence the

population is afflicted by almost the same hardships which pressed upon it in the hideous days of the war.

AN APPEAL FOR THE HUNGRY.

Wherefore, once again, inspired by the consciousness of that universal fatherhood which it is Our office to sustain, and with the words of the Divine Master on Our lips—"I have compassion on the multitude . . . for they have nothing to eat"—now, when the anniversary day of the birth of Christ draws nigh, a second time We call loudly upon Christian peoples to give Us the means whereby We may offer some relief to the sick and suffering children, of whatsoever nationality they may be. Yes, We call on all who have hearts of kindness and pity to make a generous offering, but in particular to cities of the world, to those who can with comparative ease stretch out a helping hand to their poor little brothers in Christ. Is not the birthday of Christ Jesus in an especial manner the feast of the young? See, then, how the desolate children of those scattered districts strain suppliant hands to those other happy children, and seem to point to the cradle where the Divine Infant cries in helplessness! Yet, is not that Infant the common brother of them all, He who "being rich became poor," who from that manger, as from the throne of heavenly wisdom, silently teaches us not only the value of brotherly love but also how men from their tenderest years onward must detach themselves from the longing for the goods of the world and share them with the poor, who in their very poverty are so much nearer to Christ?

Surely the children of the richer parts of Europe will have it in their power to nourish and clothe those little ones of their own age who languish in want, and especially should this be so at the approaching season of the Nativity of Our Lord, which parents are wont to render still happier for their children by little gifts and presents. And shall We think that these last are endowed with such a spirit as to be unwilling to contribute even a part of their own little savings, whereby they might strengthen the weakness of children who are in want? Oh, what a deep consolation, what joys they will secure for them-

selves, if haply they become the means whereby those little brothers of theirs, who are deprived of all help and all pleasures, should spend the approaching Christmas time just a little more comfortably, just a little more happily. For even as the Infant Jesus on the night of His birth blessed with a most sweet smile the shepherds who came with gifts to lighten the burden of His poverty, so He will reward with His blessing and heavenly graces those children who, fired with love for Him, shall soften the misery and the sorrow of their little brothers. Nay, there is nothing else more acceptable to the Infant Jesus that they could do or offer at this season. And so We earnestly exhort all Christian parents, to whom the Heavenly Father has committed the grave charge of training up their offspring to the practice of charity and the other virtues, to use this happy opportunity of exciting and cultivating in the minds of their children sentiments of humanity and holy compassion. And in this matter it pleases Us to set before you an example worthy of all imitation; for We remember that last year many children of the Roman nobility made their offerings to Us personally, offerings which, at the suggestion of their parents, they had collected amongst themselves not without some sacrifice of their individual pleasures.

BETHLEHEM'S MEANING.

We have said that this work of charity and kindness would be most pleasing to the Infant Jesus. And, indeed, why does the name Bethlehem mean one and the same thing as "House of Bread," unless it be that there Christ was to be born into the light of day, Christ, who, solicitous for our weakness, gave Himself as food to nourish our souls, and who in the words "Give us this day our daily bread" taught us to beg ardently every day of the Father for nourishment of soul and body? Oh, how Our heart would expand if We were certain that throughout the Christmas festivities there would be no child whose sorrow should wring the dear heart of its mother, and that there would be no mother who should look upon her little ones with weeping eyes.

And so, Venerable Brethren, We entrust Our project to you, even as We did a year ago, that you may bring it

into effect, especially those of you who dwell in districts which enjoy a happier fortune and a more tranquil state of affairs.

And inasmuch as those words of Christ Our Lord should take deep possession of your souls, "He that shall receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me," We beg that you leave no measure untried whereby the liberality and generosity of the Faithful over whom you are set may correspond to the urgency of the present need. Accordingly, it is Our wish that you forthwith announce throughout the whole of your several dioceses that a collection of alms is to be made on the twenty-eighth day of this month, the feast of the Holy Innocents, or, if you prefer, on the Sunday immediately preceding, for the support of the children made needy by the war, and that you particularly recommend this collection to the children in your diocese; further, that with all the diligence in your power you see that the money thus collected is sent either to Us or to the "Save the Children Fund," which We have before mentioned.

For Ourselves, in order that, after exhorting the Faithful by Our words, We may stir their generosity by Our example, We have set apart one hundred thousand Italian lire for this most sacred work of charity. Meanwhile, Venerable Brethren, to you and to all your clergy and people, We lovingly impart the Apostolic Benediction, a pledge of heavenly reward and a token of Our own paternal good-will.

Given at Rome at St. Peter's on the first day of the month of December, in the year nineteen hundred and twenty, the seventh of Our Pontificate.

BENEDICT XV, POPE.

Modesty in Dress

*The Holy Father's Letter to Mrs. Clara Douglas Sherman,
Sometime President of the International
Federation of Catholic Alumnae.*

Beloved Daughter in Christ,

Greeting and Apostolic Blessing:

How important it is for the common weal that all pious women, uniting in holy fellowship, should strive together

to restore the spirit and further the aims of Christian life, no one assuredly can fail to see, so widespread are the ravages of vice and multifarious the allurements to sin which in deplorable evidence meet the eye at every turn.

We, therefore, are deeply gratified to learn that the Federation over which you zealously preside, though organized only five years ago, has grown and prospered so well that within a short time it has rendered meritorious service to Church and country alike.

For We know that your purpose is not merely to inspire other women with the worthiest ideals as far as you can do so through your position or influence or wholesome instruction, but also to set before them, in your own lives, shining examples of every virtue. In fact, We recently have noted, as a conspicuous proof of your activity, that in obedience to Our direction, you took all possible means to check indecent abuse in women's attire.

Heartily, then, We rejoice in the good work you have accomplished; and most earnestly We desire that in future, with the support of Our approval and always with the guidance of true piety, you carry on more and more vigorously your noble undertaking. And, further, it is Our prayer that other high-minded women, in ever-increasing numbers, may be kindled by your zeal and may join with you in whole-souled endeavor for the welfare of the Church.

Meantime, as a pledge of heavenly graces which We implore for you in their fulness, and as a token of Our fatherly good-will, We most affectionately bestow upon you, beloved daughter in Christ, upon your whole Federation and upon all who in any way are helpful to it, Our Apostolic Blessing.

BENEDICT XV, POPE.